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ABSTRACT

As part of a statewide followup study of all students who entered a community college in the fall of 1970, a questionnaire was mailed in April 1974 to the 3,615 students who had entered Montgomery Community College in fall 1970. Twenty percent of the questionnaires were nondeliverable; thus, 2,890 students received the questionnaire, and of these, 1,090 responded. The participants' responses as to their educational goals at college entrance and whether they felt they had achieved their goals or not were analyzed. The results of the analysis showed that: (1) within seven semesters following enrollment, 16 percent of the 1970 class had graduated with either an AA or certificate; 11 percent were still enrolled at the college, and the remaining 73 percent had left to either transfer or go to work; (2) the majority stated that their educational goal had been to either take some college courses prior to transferring or to earn an AA degree before transferring; and (3) the graduates felt that they had achieved their goals; the nongraduates were about evenly divided as to goal achievement attitudes. (The study data are compiled in six tables.) (DB)

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FOLLOW-UP OF STUDENTS WHO ENTERED MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE FALL 1970

A Preliminary Analysis of Student Goals

Office of Institutional Research and Analysis

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Dean

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MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Rockville, Maryland

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FOLLOW-UP OF STUDENTS WHO ENTERED
MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FALL 1970

Montgomery Community College participated in a state-wide follow-up study of all students who entered a community college in the fall of 1970. Of the 3615 students who entered Montgomery that fall, 2536 (70%) were matriculated in a program and 1079 (30%) were non-degree special students. By the end of the Fall 1973 semester 413 or 16 percent of the matriculated students had graduated. Some 1850 had left prior to graduation and 273 of the matriculated students were still enrolled at the College after seven semesters. Sixty-one or 6 percent of the special students were still enrolled.

Of the non-graduating matriculated students there were 184 who had earned sixty or more credits before leaving. If these students plus the 273 still enrolled were to be considered as potential graduates and added to the 413 who received their certificate or degree, the total becomes 870 or 34 percent of the entering class of Fall 1970. Thus, any effort toward increasing the number of students who graduate must take into account the length of time some students take to earn a degree as well as those who have earned enough credits and quality points but who leave without officially graduating. Some of the students in this study had earned as many as eighty credits without graduating.

Data concerning the status of the students who entered Montgomery in the Fall of 1970 are presented in Table I.

TABLE I

STATUS OF STUDENTS WHO ENTERED
MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FALL 1970

STATUS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENTERING MONTGOMERY COLLEGE FALL 1970					
	Matriculated Students		Special (Non-Degree)		Total Students	
Graduated With AA or Certificate by December 1973	413	16%	0	0%	413	12%
Still Enrolled at Montgomery College as of Spring 1974	273	11%	61	6%	334	9%
Left Montgomery College Prior to Graduation	1850	73%	1018	94%	2868	79%
TOTAL	2536	100%	1079	100%	3615	100%

The Survey

The questionnaire developed by the Maryland Community College Research Group was mailed to the 3615 Fall 1970 entering students in April of 1974. There were 725 (20%) returned by the Postal Service as non-deliverable. Thus, 2890 students received the questionnaire and of these 1090 (38%) responded. The response rate was not even across the three status groups within the study. For example, of the 413 graduates in the study, 224 or 54 percent responded, of the 334 currently enrolled students 165 or 49 percent responded, and of the 2868 students who left prior to graduation 701 or 24 percent returned a completed questionnaire. The assumption was that the addresses were more current for the graduates than for the non-graduates and interest in the College probably higher. The questionnaire was worded in terms of "Former Students", thus, it is possible that some of the currently enrolled students were confused as to whether or not they should respond. (See Table II)

The Findings

The staff of the State Board for Community Colleges is tabulating the results of the follow-up; however, before forwarding the forms to Annapolis we recorded the educational goals at the time the students entered the College and whether or not they felt they had achieved their goal while at Montgomery. The distribution of entry goals for the entire group is shown on Table III. The goal most often mentioned was "To take some college level courses before transferring" (32%) and the second most popular goal was "To obtain an AA degree before transferring (30%).

TABLE II

STATUS OF RESPONDING STUDENTS WHO
ENTERED MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FALL 1970

STATUS	STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY	PERCENT OF TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Graduated With AA or Certificate by December 1973	224	21%
Still Enrolled at Montgomery College as of Spring 1974	165	15%
Left Prior to Graduation	701	64%
TOTAL RESPONSES	1090	100%

TABLE III

EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF STUDENTS ENTERING
MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FALL 1970

	NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITH GOAL	PERCENT OF TOTAL RESPONDENTS
To take some college level courses before transferring	352	32%
To obtain an AA degree before transferring	323	30%
To obtain an AA degree; no further immediate educational plans	127	12%
To obtain training in a special program or to upgrade skills	100	9%
To take one or several courses of special interest	76	7%
To take some liberal arts courses which interest me	56	5%
To obtain a Certificate or Diploma to improve or upgrade skills	39	4%
No Response	17	1%
TOTAL	1090	100%

However, the educational goals the students held when they entered Montgomery varied within the three status groups, as did the degree to which the students felt their goals had been achieved at Montgomery.

The Graduates. The majority of graduates said they had entered the College with the intent of obtaining an AA degree before transferring. Of this group 92 percent indicated they had achieved their goal; the other 8 percent may have transferred credit back from their transfer institution to complete their AA requirements or not transferred at all.

The second most common goal at the time of entry held by the graduates was "To obtain an AA degree; no further immediate educational plans." (20%) Ninety-six percent of this group said they had achieved their goal while here.

Of special interest is the group comprising about 22 percent of the graduates who said that when they entered the College they did not plan to graduate. This suggests that an important segment of the student body revise their goals upward once they enroll at Montgomery.

Of the entire group of graduates it appears that 94 percent felt they had achieved their original educational goal before they left the College. (See Table IV)

The non-graduates. Many students come to the College with no plans of earning an AA or certificate. Of those surveyed in this study who left prior to graduation, over 40 percent said they had

TABLE IV

EXTENT TO WHICH ORIGINAL EDUCATIONAL GOALS
WERE ACHIEVED AT MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

	STUDENTS WHO EARNED AA OR CERTIFICATE							
Goals	Graduates Achieving Goal		Graduates Not Achieving Goal		No Response		Total Graduates	
To obtain an AA degree before transferring	112	92%	6	5%	4	3%	122	100%
To obtain an AA degree; no further immediate educational plans	43	96%	2	4%	0	0%	45	100%
To take some college level courses before transferring	30	97%	1	3%	0	0%	31	100%
To obtain training in a special program or to up grade skills	9	90%	1	10%	0	0%	10	100%
To obtain a certificate or diploma to improve or upgrade skills	7	100%	0	0%	0	0%	7	100%
To take some liberal arts courses which interest me	4	100%	0	0%	0	0%	4	100%
To take one or several courses of special interest	4	100%	0	0%	0	0%	4	100%
No Response	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
TOTAL	210	94%	10	4%	4	2%	224	100%

originally come "To take some college level courses before transferring." Almost 80 percent of these students with this goal indicated they had achieved it.

About a third of the non-returning students said they had entered the community college with the intent of earning an AA or certificate. Needless to say, these students did not achieve their goal. They appear to have either transferred to a four-year college or gone to work. Overall, about half of the students who leave prior to graduation feel they have achieved the goal with which they entered. (See Table V)

The enrolled students. Of those students still enrolled as of Spring 1974, almost half (46%) entered with the goal of earning a degree or certificate at Montgomery. The others entered for the purpose of taking a few courses. Since these students are still enrolled many of them will eventually graduate. (See Table VI)

Summary

Within seven semesters of enrolling at Montgomery Community College, 16 percent of the 1970 entering class of matriculated students had graduated with either an AA or certificate. Eleven percent of the class was still enrolled at the College and can be considered potential graduates. The remaining 73 percent had apparently left to either transfer or go to work. Some of these earned 60 or more credits before leaving. Six percent of the non-degree special students were also still enrolled seven semesters after they first entered.

TABLE V

EXTENT TO WHICH EDUCATIONAL GOALS AT TIME OF ENTRY WERE ACHIEVED AT MONTGOMERY COLLEGE BY STUDENTS WHO LEFT WITHOUT GRADUATING

GOALS	STUDENTS ACHIEVING GOAL		STUDENTS NOT ACHIEVING GOAL		NO RESPONSE		TOTAL NON-GRADUATES	
To take some college level courses before transferring	228	79%	56	19%	6	2%	290	100%
To obtain an AA degree before transferring	18	12%	133	88%	0	0%	151	100%
To obtain training in a special program or to upgrade skills	35	51%	34	49%	0	0%	69	100%
To take one or several courses of special interest	32	53%	27	44%	2	3%	61	100%
To obtain an AA degree; no further immediate educational plans	2	3%	57	93%	2	3%	61	100%
To take some liberal arts courses which interest me	20	51%	17	44%	2	5%	39	100%
To obtain a certificate or diploma to improve or upgrade skills	5	19%	20	77%	1	4%	26	100%
No Response	0	0%	2	50%	2	50%	4	100%
TOTAL	340	49%	346	49%	15	2%	701	100%

TABLE VI

THE EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF STUDENTS WHO ENTERED MONTGOMERY COLLEGE FALL 1970 AND WHO WERE STILL ENROLLED AS OF SPRING 1974

GOALS	STUDENTS STILL ENROLLED	
To obtain an AA degree before transferring	49	30%
To take some college level courses before transferring	31	19%
To obtain training in a special program or to upgrade skills	21	13%
To obtain an AA degree; no further immediate educational plans	21	13%
To take some liberal arts courses which interest me	13	8%
To take one or several courses of special interest	11	7%
To obtain a certificate or diploma to improve or upgrade skills	6	3%
No Response	12	7%
TOTAL	164	100%

The majority of the students said when they entered Montgomery their educational goal had been to either take some college courses before transferring or to earn an AA degree before transferring.

The graduates felt they had achieved their goals while the non-graduates were about evenly divided. The latter group included many students who had come planning to earn a degree and had not done so. The students still enrolled apparently intend to achieve their educational goals before they leave the College.

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